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SUBJECT: ACTIONS ON LEBANON

REF: (A) SECTO 9038; (B) USUN 3130; (C) STATE 199193

1. ALL ADDRESSEES: WE HAVE BEEN EXCHANGING VIEWS WITH
THE SECRETARY ON WAYS TO DEFUSE THE DANGEROUS SECURITY
SITUATION IN BEIRUT, WHICH THREATENS TO ESCALATE MOMENTAR-
ILY. WHILE THE SOUTH LEBANON PROBLEM, INVOLVING THE NEED
TO MOVE THE LEBANESE ARMY UNIT INTO SOUTH CENTRAL LEBANON,
OVERLAPS WITH THE BEIRUT SECURITY SITUATION AND HAS

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ENDURANCE OF THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT AND UNIFIL, THE MAIN FOCUS OF THE EFFORTS OUTLINED BELOW INVOLVES THE NEED TO CALM THE MARONITE MILITIA-SYRIAN ADF FORCES CONFRONTATION. THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOW THE SECRETARY'S GUIDELINES:

2. FOR JIDDA, KUWAIT, KHARTOUM, ABU DHABI, DAMASCUS, BEIRUT: OUR STRATEGY IS TO URGE THE FOUR ARAB TROOP CONTRIBUTORS TO THE ARAB DETERRENT FORCE (ADF)--SYRIA, SAUDI ARABIA, SUDAN AND THE UAE--PLUS KUWAIT, WHICH HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE OVERSEEING THE 1976 ARMISTICE IN LEBANON, TO MEET TOGETHER URGENTLY WITH THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT. THESE STATES POSSESS

SHARED GOALS IN LEBANON, IN THAT THEY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED AT VARIOUS TIMES IN COMMON EFFORTS TO STABILIZE THE SITUATION THERE THROUGH MEDIATION, TROOP PARTICIPATION, FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE ADF, SUPPORT OF SARKIS, ETC. WE WANT TO IMPRESS UPON THESE STATES THAT THE LEBANESE PROBLEMTHEATENS TO SPILL OVER INTO A WIDER ARAB ARENA (THROUGH GREATER ISRAELI INVOLVEMENT THAN IS NOW THE CASE) AND THAT WE NEED THEM TO WORK TOGETHER COOPERATIVELY IN NEW, IMAGINATIVE, BUT ABOVE ALL QUICK WAYS TO EASE THE SECRET

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SITUATION IN THE BEIRUT AREA, SO THAT THE U.S. IN TURN CAN SHOW THE ISRAELIS THAT PRACTICAL NEW EFFORTS ARE UNDERWAY AND DESERVE A RESTRAINED ISRAELI STANCE.

3. WE ARE PROPOSING THAT AMBASSADOR ATHERTON USE THE FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS IN HIS MEETINGS AUGUST 9-10 IN SAUDI ARABIA. DRAWING ON STRATEGY FRAMEWORK IN PARA. 2 ABOVE, PARA 2 ACTION ADDRESSEES SHOULD PARALLEL THESE POINTS IN APPROACHES TO HOST GOVERNMENTS, ADJUSTING THEM TO FIT LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

-- THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE BEIRUT AREA HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY DANGEROUS. THERE HAVE BEEN PROVOCATIONS AND HARASSMENTS BY MARONITE MILITIAS AGAINST THE ADF, FOLLOWED BY EXTREMELY HEAVY RETALIATORY BOMBARDMENTS BY THE SYRIAN FORCES IN THE ADF, AND THEN NEW CYCLES. THE TOLL OF PROPERTY DAMAGE AND CIVILIAN CASUALTIES HAS BEEN HIGH. MOST PEOPLE IN PARTS OF EAST BEIRUT HAVE HAD TO FLEE. THIS CYCLE MUST BE ENDED.

-- U.S. OBJECTIVES IN LEBANON ARE IDENTICAL WITH THOSE OF THE HOST GOVERNMENTS, WE BELIEVE. THEY ARE TO PRESERVE THE COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE, TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, SOVEREIGNTY, AND UNITY, AND TO FORESTALL PARTITION. WE MUST ALSO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO PREVENT A WIDER CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST FROM DEVELOPING AS A RESULT OF CONFRONTATIONS WITHIN LEBANON. WE HAVE BEEN CONCERNED

OVER REPORTS THAT THERE WILL BE A MAJOR OUTBREAK OF FIGHTING IN THE AUGUST 8-10 PERIOD, BUT DATES UP TO THE 15TH HAVE BEEN MENTIONED. IF THESE CONFRONTATIONS ARE NOT ENDED SOMEHOW, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT ISRAEL--DESPITE OUR BEST EFFORTS--WILL BECOME MORE INVOLVED THAN IT HAS BEEN.

-- SAUDI ARABIA HAS PLAYED A CENTRAL ROLE IN THE PAST IN HELPING TO STABILIZE THE LEBANESE SITUATION. THROUGH ITS
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EFFORTS, THE RIYADH MINI-SUMMIT WAS CONVENED IN LATE 1976, BRINGING AN END TO THE LEBANESE CIVIL CONFLICT. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT SAUDI ARABIA MAKE A SIMILAR MAJOR EFFORT NOW. (OTHER ACTION ADDRESSEES AMEND FOREGOING POINT TO

MENTION PARTICULAR ROLE PLAYED BY HOST GOVERNMENT.)

-- SYRIA, WHICH PROVIDES MOST OF THE TROOPS TO THE ADF, IS NOW LOCKED IN REGULAR CONFRONTATION WITH THE MARONITE MILITIAS. THE PAST GENERALLY CONSTRUCTIVE AND VIRTUALLY INDISPENSABLE ROLE WHICH THE SYRIANS AND THE ADF HAVE PLAYED IN PRESERVING SECURITY IN LEBANON IS NOW BEING UNDONE AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS ARE DEVELOPING, BECAUSE OF THE RECENT EVENTS IN WHICH HEAVY SYRIAN SHELLINGS TOOK PLACE. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT A RESOLUTION OF THE BEIRUT PROBLEM BE FOUND IN A WAY WHICH DOES NOT CAUSE EMBARRASSMENT TO THE SYRIANS YET STILL DEALS WITH THE CAUSES OF THE FIGHTING IN A REALISTIC AND EFFECTIVE WAY.

-- WE THEREFORE URGE THAT THE GOVERNMENTS WE ARE APPROACHING ASSEMBLE TOGETHER WITH THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT TO EXAMINE URGENTLY MEANS TO DEFUSE THE SITUATION. IN OUR VIEW THIS IS FIRST AND FOREMOST AN ARAB PROBLEM. THE HOST ARAB STATES AND LEBANON WORKING COLLECTIVELY WOULD SHOW THE SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY THAT THE OCCASION DEMANDS AND, IN THE PROCESS, WOULD PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT TO THE MODERATE SARKIS REGIME WHICH IS PURSUING POLICIES TO UNIFY THE COUNTRY.

-- WE WOULD URGE THAT SUCH A MEETING INVESTIGATE WAYS TO BRING ABOUT A NEW AND EFFECTIVE CEASEFIRE, DISENGAGEMENT OR SEPARATION OF FORCES, AND THE INSTALLATION--WHEREVER POSSIBLE--OF LEBANESE POLICE AND ARMY UNITS TO PRESERVE
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SECURITY IN KEY FLASH POINTS AND ALONG CONFRONTATION LINES.

-- WE WOULD SUGGEST ALSO THAT THE GOVERNMENTS IN SUCH A

MEETING COLLECTIVELY CONSIDER WAYS IN WHICH OTHER GOVERNMENTS MIGHT ASSIST THIS COALITION OF MODERATE STATES IN RESOLVING THE PROBLEM, SUCH AS BY AUGMENTATION OF THE ADF WITH TROOP CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS ACCEPTABLE TO THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT. (FYI: AVOID MENTION OF UN FORCES, NOT ONLY BECAUSE THIS SEEMS A DOUBTFUL POSSIBILITY FOR NOW, BUT ALSO BECAUSE IT COULD BE SEEN BY THE SYRIANS AS A REVIVAL OF OUR EARLIER INITIATIVE TO GO TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL. END FYI.)

-- THE SYRIANS HAVE TALKED OF THREE COURSES. THEY SAID THEY COULD WITHDRAW COMPLETELY FROM THE COUNTRY. THE GOL DOES NOT WANT THIS TO HAPPEN, SINCE THIS WOULD LEAD TO A MARONITE MILITIA-PALESTINIAN CONFRONTATION SOONER OR LATER; WE AGREE. THEY COULD CONTINUE THEIR PRESENT COURSE OF HEAVY RETALIATORY BOMBARDMENTS WHEN PROVOKED. THIS HAS PRODUCED DANGEROUS SITUATION AND IS A STERILE COURSE.

THEY HAVE INDICATED THAT, IF THE GOL SO ORDERED, THEY COULD CRUSH THE MARONITE MILITIAS MILITARILY. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THIS BE ALLOWED TO OCCUR, SINCE THERE IS PROBABLY NO WAY THE U.S. COULD DISSUADE ISRAEL FROM GETTING INVOLVED. NO ONE HAS TO BE TOLD THE CONSEQUENCES.

-- THE U.S. HAS MADE MAJOR EFFORTS ITSELF TO DEFUSE THE SITUATION, IN CONTACTS WITH THE GOL, MARONITE LEADERS, SYRIA, ISRAEL, AND GOVERNMENTS AND QUARTERS WITH AN INFLUENCE ON THE SITUATION. WE WILL BE UNDERTAKING RE-NEWED MAJOR EFFORTS WITH QUARTERS HAVING INFLUENCE ON THE MARONITE MILITIA LEADERS TO URGE RESTRAINT AND A BREATHING SPELL SO NEW ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE WORKED OUT.

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-- WE HAVE MADE SUSTAINED AND MAJOR EFFORTS WITH THE ISRAELIS, MOST RECENTLY DURING THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO ISRAEL, TO DISCOURAGE ANY ISRAELI ACTION WHICH WOULD EXACERBATE THE SITUATION. WE HAVE URGED THE ISRAELIS TO STOP SENDING TO THEIR LEBANESE CONTACTS MILITARY EQUIPMENT OF A KIND AND IN A WAY WHICH ENCOURAGES THE MARONITE FORCES TO PROLONG THE FIGHTING OR TO CONTINUE PROVOKING THE ADF.

-- WE HOLD NO SYMPATHY FOR CERTAIN OF THE MARONITE MILITANTS WHO MAY HAVE TRIED TO PROVOKE THE SYRIANS DELIBERATELY IN ORDER TO INVITE MASSIVE RETALIATION AND THEREBY MOBILIZE THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AGAINST THE SYRIAN PRESENCE IN CHRISTIAN AREAS.

-- IF THIS SITUATION IS NOT RESOLVED, THE RESULT MIGHT NOT BE WIDER HOSTILITIES IN THE AREA, BUT IT MIGHT WELL MEAN THE FALL OF THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT, FURTHER POLARIZA-

TION OF COMMUNITIES IN LEBANON, MOVES TOWARD PARTITION,
AND A PROLONGED PERIOD OF INSTABILITY AND CONFRONTATION
IN ALL AREAS IN LEBANON.

4. PARA. 2 ACTION ADDRESSEES SHOULD NOT VOLUNTEER
COMMENTS ON THE SOUTH LEBANON PROBLEM BUT, IF ASKED, CAN
TAKE THE FOLLOWING LINE:

-- THE U.S. HAS BEEN TRYING FOR MORE THAN A YEAR TO
ASSIST THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT IN REESTABLISHING ITS
AUTHORITY IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. THIS IS THE ONLY LONG TERM
ANSWER TO PROBLEMS IN THAT AREA. CONSISTENT WITH THIS
POLICY, THE U.S. PRESSED FOR ADOPTION OF SECURITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION 425, WHICH HAD AS ONE OF ITS THREE BASIC OB-
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JECTIVES UNIFIL ASSISTANCE IN THE REESTABLISHMENT OF
LEBANESE AUTHORITY IN THIS AREA. DESPITE THE CONSIDERABLE

RISKS, THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT RECENTLY DECIDED TO SEND A
650-MAN UNIT INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON TO COMMENCE THE PRO-
CESS OF REESTABLISHING ITS AUTHORITY THERE, WHICH WILL
REQUIRE MUCH TIME AND THE EXPANSION OF THE PRESENT ARMY.
WHILE THE PASSAGE OF THIS UNIT FURTHER INTO THE SOUTH
HAS ENCOUNTERED OBSTACLES--BOTH EXPECTED AND UNEXPECTED--
WE BELIEVE WAYS WILL BE FOUND TO OVERCOME THEM EVENTUALLY.
THE U.S. IS DOING ITS BEST, INCLUDING IN DISCUSSIONS WITH
THE ISRAELIS, TO ASSURE THE SAFE ONWARD PASSAGE OF THE
LEBANESE UNIT.

-- WE ASK THAT HOST GOVERNMENTS WITHHOLD ANY CRITICISM
OF THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT FOR WHAT HAS OR WHAT HAS NOT
BEEN ACCOMPLISHED IN THIS VENTURE, OR THE TEMPORARY RPT
TEMPORARY COMPROMISES THAT MAY RPT MAY BE NECESSARY IN
ORDER TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM PRAGMATICALLY.

5. IF HOST GOVERNMENTS ACCUSE US OF BEING CHARACTER-
ISTICALLY OVERCONCERNED ABOUT CHRISTIANS IN LEBANON, AND
HAVING IGNORED THE PLIGHT OF THE PALESTINIANS WHEN THE
SYRIANS WERE FIGHTING THEM, YOU SHOULD STATE IN THE
FIRMEST POSSIBLE WAY THAT THE U.S. WANTS SECURITY AND
OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL COMMUNITIES IN LEBANON, CHRISTIAN
AND MUSLIM ALIKE, AND ITS POLICY IN SUPPORT OF A STRONG
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND THE BUILDING OF IMPORTANT NATIONAL
INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS THE ARMY IS CONSISTENT WITH THAT
OBJECTIVE.

-- THE U.S. CONSIDERS IT EQUALLY IMPORTANT THAT THE
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN LEBANON REMAIN AN INTEGRAL PART
OF THE GENERAL ARAB WORLD, NOT AN ISOLATED MINI-STATE,
AND OUR ACTIONS ARE CONSISTENT WITH THIS CONVICTION.

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6. PARA. 2 ADDRESSEES: IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE U.S. NOT RPT NOT BE SEEN AS TRYING TO UNDERCUT THE SYRIANS. THE IMPRESSION WE MUST CONVEY IS THAT SYRIANS AND LEBANESE NEED HELP FROM THE MODERATE ARAB STATES IN THE RESOLUTION OF THIS KNOTTY PROBLEM.

7. AGAIN FOR AMBASSADOR ATHERTON: FOR YOUR TALK WITH HUSSEIN, BELIEVE YOU CAN DRAW ON FOREGOING TALKING POINTS SELECTIVELY, AND ADD THE FOLLOWING:

-- WE HOPE THAT HUSSEIN, WHOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH ASSAD HAS RECENTLY IMPROVED, WILL TALK TO ASSAD PERSONALLY ABOUT THE U.S. INITIATIVE TO ENSURE THAT HIS SUSPICION RE OUR MOTIVATION IS NOT AROUSED. THE SYRIANS WERE GREATLY IRRITATED BY THE HOUSE ACTION CUTTING THE SYRIAN AID PROGRAM AND SUSPICION OF U.S. OBJECTIVES MAY HAVE COME TO

-- WE WOULD APPRECIATE HUSSEIN USING HIS INFLUENCE WITH THE CHAMOUNS TO CONVINCE THEM TO DESIST FROM EFFORTS TO SUSTAIN THE CONFRONTATION WITH THE SYRIANS.

-- HUSSEIN WILL RECALL OUR EXAMINING IN 1976 WHETHER JORDANIAN TROOPS MIGHT BE EMPLOYED IN LEBANON. ALTHOUGH HE WAS WILLING IN PRINCIPLE, IT HAD TO BE RECOGNIZED THAT JORDANIAN TROOPS COULD INCITE THE PALESTINIANS TO ATTEMPT MILITARY CHALLENGES. RECALLING THIS HISTORY, AND CONSIDERING CHANGED NATURE OF PROBLEM, WE WONDER WHETHER THERE IS ANY POSSIBILITY THAT JORDANIAN TROOPS COULD BE EMPLOYED TO HELP MAINTAIN SECURITY IN CHRISTIAN AREAS AS PART OF AN AUGMENTED ADF. THIS IS NOT A FORMAL U.S. PROPOSAL, BUT MERELY A WISH TO EXPLORE THE LIMITS OF THE POSSIBLE.

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8. FOR AMBASSADOR ATHERTON AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS: ANY SUGGESTED REVISIONS IN ABOVE SHOULD BE FLASHED TO KUWAUT, KHARTOUM, ABU DHABI, DAMASCUS, BEIRUT, SINCE APPROACHES TO THESE POSTS AUGUST 9 WILL HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT RAMADAN PROBLEMS AND SHORT DAY TIME WORKING SCHEDULE.

9. FOR VATICAN OFFICE AT EMBASSY ROME: PLEASE COMMENT URGENTLY ON WAYS IN WHICH THE VATICAN MIGHT APPROPRIATELY BE APPROACHED AT THIS STAGE TO COUNSEL RESTRAINT AND MODERATION UPON THE MARONITES. PLEASE ALSO NOTE THAT MARONITE PATRIARCH WILL BE IN ROME FOR THE FUNERAL CEREMONIES AS WELL AS FOR THE PAPAL ELECTION. A MODERATE

AMONG THE MARONITES, HE IS REPORTEDLY DEEPLY SHATTERED BY
THE SYRIAN EXCESSES AND MAY BELIEVE THIS EXCUSES THE SINS
OF THE MILITANTS AMONG THE MARONITE MILITIAS. IN YOUR
JUDGMENT, CAN HE ALSO BE COMMUNICATED WITH THERE? WHICH
FORM OF COMMUNICATION WOULD BE PREFERABLE? CHRISTOPHER

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